

HOW TO GET HELP

While there is no specific “cure” for bruxism, there are several ways of alleviating the symptoms and making both your sleeping and waking life better.

Non-medical ways of combating bruxism include:

- Techniques for battling stress such as calming/relaxation exercises or professional therapy.
- Seeking a sleep specialist or clinic in order to diagnose and treat a sleeping disorder.
- Temporary use of an acrylic or soft dental guard or splint at night.
- Wearing a nighttime biofeedback device at night.
- Correcting unaligned/misaligned teeth.
- Switching medications.

Medical alternatives for extreme cases only:

Local contact:

Stanford Sleep Medicine Center
450 Broadway Street, Pavilion B,
2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA
(650) 723-6601

Information for this brochure taken from authorities on the subject matter in print or web form: MayoClinic, Columbia University's College of Dental Medicine, Academy of General Dentistry, and The Stanford Sleep Book by W.C. Dement

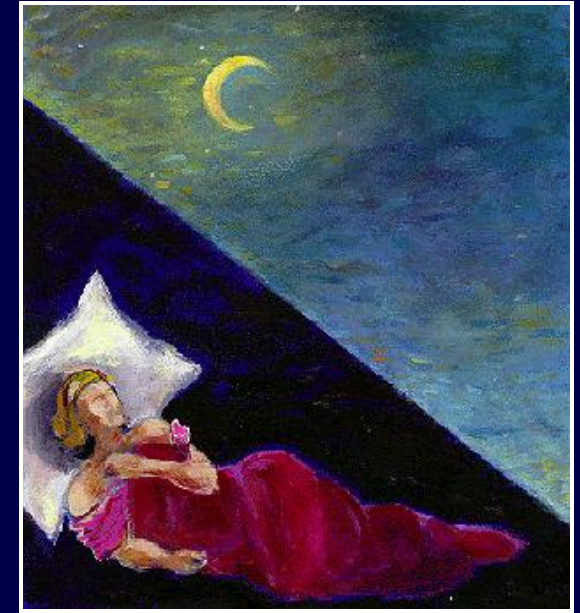
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THIS OUTREACH PROJECT COMPILED BY
GENA EDDY
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
PSYCH135: SLEEP AND DREAMS
QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?
CONTACT: GMEDDY@STANFORD.EDU

Always remember:
DROWSINESS IS RED ALERT.
Over 80% of drowsy-driving related accidents are fatal. Pull off the road. Tell someone. Save a life.



BROCHURE INTENDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY, NOT INTENDED TO TREAT OR DIAGNOSE ANY FORM OF SLEEP DISORDER. AUTHOR IS NOT A DOCTOR. IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OR ALL OF THESE SYMPTOMS, CONTACT YOUR DENTIST AND LOCAL SLEEP CLINIC.



BRUXISM:

n. Nighttime jaw clenching and tooth grinding.

More than just a headache in the morning?

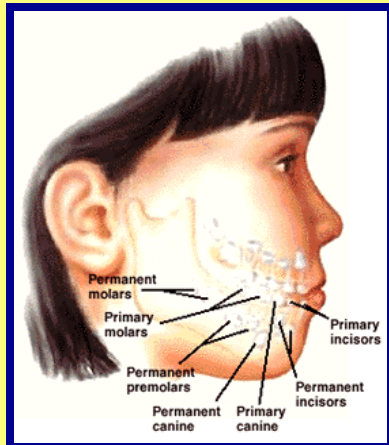
Bruxism, simply put.

What is nighttime bruxism?

Bruxism [or bruxing] occurs when a sleeping individual clenches his or her teeth together, unconsciously, and/or grinds the teeth back and forth. While no single person “discovered” bruxism, reported cases of the disorder date back as early as 1654.

What are the symptoms? What may indicate that I have nighttime bruxism?

- **Insomnia, inability to fall asleep**
- **Headache, possible earaches.**
- **Sore or painful jaw**
- **Eating disorders**
- **Anxiety, stress, any form of tension**
- **...and at times, depression.**



What are the possible causes?

Stress is a main cause of bruxism. However, having this condition could be the result of a much greater issue: a sleep disorder. **Obstructive sleep apnea** [fatal frequent involuntary pauses in breathing due to an obstructed airway, characterized by snoring], **hypopnea** [abnormal chronic shallow breathing during sleep], and **moderate daytime sleepiness** all could be the underlying cause for your nighttime bruxing.

Other factors include high blood-alcohol content, smoking, overconsumption of caffeinated beverages, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, various chemical drugs and stimulants, malocclusion, Huntington’s or Parkinson’s disease, and SSRI’s and other depression treatments.



A link to dreaming?

In a 1964 study at University of Chicago by Drs. Georges Reding, William Rubright, Allan Rechtschaffen and Robert Daniels, researchers concluded that there is a close relationship between bruxism and dreaming characterized by periods of rapid eye movements and masseter contractions, the muscle above the jaw bone [the mandible].

Who does it affect?

*Bruxism affects approximately 30-40 million adults and children in the United States alone, making it one of the most common sleep disorders and habits. All genders are affected. *Note: While physical make up does not determine the presence of bruxism, obese individuals are especially prone to Obstructive Sleep Apnea.*

Bruxism in Children

Why would my child possibly grind his or her teeth? A surprisingly large amount of children brux at night-30%. While most kids grow out of childhood nighttime bruxism by age 6, parents should take note of their child’s behavior. Hyperactive, teething, and stressed children are more prone to bruxing at night. They may be losing baby teeth, don’t feel like their teeth “fit” together yet, or have an earache. Other less common causes are the presence of pinworms, creating discomfort, allergies, or dehydration. Sleep-related disorders that could cause bruxism are less prevalent in children, but parents should still take note of their child’s sleeping habits.

How does this affect my teeth and my waking life?

- **Chronic daytime headaches**
- **Excessive tooth wear and decay.**
- **Periodontal damage may be present.**
- **Temporomandibular pain**
- **Slight unbalance or dislocation of the jaw**

